

Fire Doors

Identification

All self-closing fire doors should have a controlled self-closing device conforming to BS EN 1154 fitted to them. These are typically an overhead arm actuated type.

A 'perko' chain device installed on the hinge side of the door between the edge of the door leaf and the door frame **does not** conform to this standard.

Fire door information to all residents

The request is that the Responsible Person (RP) is to provide specified information on fire doors to all residents to premises that fall within the 'tall building' category and which contain common parts through which residents would need to evacuate in the case of an emergency. Examples can be found in the paragraph below.

The required information will remind all residents that:

- Fire doors should be kept shut when not in use
- Residents or guests should not tamper with the self-closing devices; and
- Residents should report any faults or damages with doors immediately to the responsible person.

The RP should provide the following information:

- to a new resident of domestic premises in the building, as soon as reasonably practicable after that resident moves into the premises; and
- to all residents of domestic premises within the building, within each period of 12 months.

Fire door checks by RPs

The request is for the RP to undertake checks on specified fire doors for premises that fall within the 'tall building' category. This includes fire doors leading to or located on:

- Staircases
- Lobbies
- Storage cupboards
- Doors to ducts
- Flat front doors leading into the common areas.

Purpose

One purpose is to protect the common areas of buildings from fire and smoke ingress, thereby maintaining tenable conditions for escape by occupants, and to facilitate firefighting and rescue efforts. The second purpose is to make residents safer, as well as feel safer in their homes.

General considerations

For buildings above 11m, the expectation is that the RP will be complete checks on fire doors within common areas every 3 months and to check individual domestic premises front doors every 12 months.

It is expected that the majority of flat occupiers will recognise it is in their own best interests to cooperate with their RP to facilitate fire door checks, maintenance and any necessary upgrades.

Conditions imposed in the terms and conditions of some occupancy contracts, or lease agreements for flats, include a requirement for the occupier/owner to permit the building's RP to conduct periodic inspection of the structure and fire resisting doors. If this is the case, the RP should use this facility.

If there are no specific conditions imposed in the occupancy contract or lease agreement the RP will need to determine the best approach to engage with leaseholders to gain access to undertake the annual checks of their flat entrance doors. This could include the RP agreeing a date with leaseholders, so access can be granted.

Inspection process

SJFRS recommend the following test: -

- 1) With a self-closing device, open the door fully and check it closes without binding on the floor. Open the door approx. 5 degrees (width of a clenched fist) and again check it closes fully, overcoming the latch or seal (if fitted). Check door closing speed to be approx. 10 seconds from 90 degrees and ensure that the door does not slam. Adjust speeds as necessary. Ensure that the doors are not being wedged open.
- 2) Make sure that door hold open devices (if fitted) are not straining the door against its self-closing device. A closer fitted at the top of the door should have a hold open device at the top of the door. A floor spring at the foot of the door should have the hold open device fitted at the bottom.
- 3) If fitted, ensure any electromagnetic hold open device is operating correctly and releases immediately power is removed (when the fire alarm activates).
- 4) If fitted, ensure any intumescent strips or combined intumescent/cold smoke seals are not damaged or missing. If in need of repair, they must be replaced with the same type originally fitted. If smoke seals have to be replaced they should be fitted in one continuous length if possible. If fixed piecemeal, they could potentially leak at the joints.
- 5) If fitted, inspect the glass. If it is cracked or broken then it must be replaced immediately. If not then in the event of a fire, the smoke and gases will travel through the glass, which means the fire door will not last its fire rating. This work must only be undertaken by companies with appropriate third-party certification.